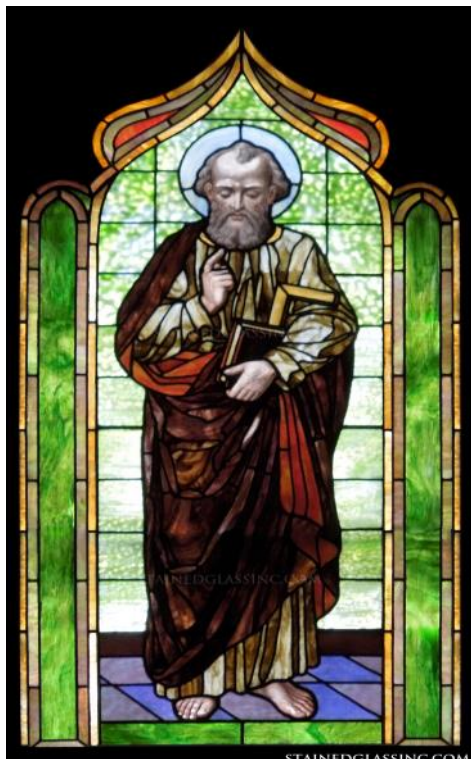




St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

THE FEAST OF SAINT THOMAS THE APOSTLE



Thomas the Apostle (Imperial Aramaic:

□□□□□, Biblical Hebrew: תומא or תומא הקדוש (תומא הליחא *Toma HaKadosh* "Thomas the Holy" or *Toma Shlikha* "Thomas the Messenger/Apostle" in Hebrew-Aramaic), Classical Syriac:

, □□□□□ *T'ōmā*, meaning "twin"; Koinē Greek: Θωμάς),^[a] also known as *Didymus* (Greek: Δίδυμος *Didymos*, meaning "twin"), was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus according to the New Testament. Thomas is commonly known as "Doubting Thomas" because he initially doubted the resurrection of Jesus Christ when he was told of it (as is related in the Gospel of John); he later confessed his faith ("My Lord and my God") on seeing the wounds left over from the crucifixion.

According to traditional accounts of the Saint Thomas Christians of modern-day Kerala in India, Saint Thomas travelled outside the Roman Empire to preach the Gospel, travelling as far as the Tamilakam which is in South India,^[1]

[Continued Pg11](#)

Saint Stephen's welcomes everyone who wishes to follow Christ, worship together, grow in faith and share God's love through service to others.

Wednesday, 21 December 2022 9:30am

Welcome and Announcements

Rev Allison Cornell

Greeting

Presider

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

People

And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath - Gather #330 Prepare the way of the Lord

Prepare the way of the Lord,

prepare the way of the Lord

and all people will see the salvation of our God (X3)

(Congregation sings three times through while the Advent wreath is lighted)

Gloria: (The Song of Mary—Magnificat, spoken)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *

for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: *

the Almighty has done great things for me,

and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him *

in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *

he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *

and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, *

and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *

for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, *

to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Collect of the Day

Presider

The Lord be with you.

People

And also with you.

Presider

Let us pray.

**All: Everliving God, who strengthened your apostle Thomas with firm and certain faith in your Son's resurrection: Grant us so perfectly and without doubt to believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, that our faith may never be found wanting in your sight; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.**

The Word of God *(please be seated for the lessons)*

First Reading : Habakkuk 2:1-4

I will stand at my watchpost,
and station myself on the rampart;

I will keep watch to see what he will say to me,
and what he will answer concerning my complaint.

Then the Lord answered me and said:

Write the vision;
make it plain on tablets,
so that a runner may read it.

For there is still a vision for the appointed time;
it speaks of the end, and does not lie.

If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
it will surely come, it will not delay.

Look at the proud!
Their spirit is not right in them,
but the righteous live by their faith.

.Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Psalm

Psalm 126 *(Read in unison)*

1 When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, *
then were we like those who dream.

2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, *
and our tongue with shouts of joy.

3 Then they said among the nations, *
"The Lord has done great things for them."

**4 The Lord has done great things for us, *
and we are glad indeed.**

**5 Restore our fortunes, O Lord, *
like the watercourses of the Negev.**

**6 Those who sowed with tears *
will reap with songs of joy.**

**7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, *
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

Second Reading : Hebrews 10:35-11-:1

Do not, therefore, abandon that confidence of yours; it brings a great reward. For you need endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

For yet “in a very little while,
the one who is coming will come and will not delay;

but my righteous one will live by faith.

My soul takes no pleasure in anyone who shrinks back.”

But we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved.

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

.Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading

Reader: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to
John (20:24-29)

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ

Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with the other disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said,

“Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ

SERMON

The Nicene Creed *All say together*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People:

Leader: *Show us your mercy, O Lord;*

All: **And grant us your salvation.**

Leader: *Clothe your ministers with righteousness;*

All: **Let your people sing with joy.**

Leader: *Give peace, O Lord, in all the world*

All: **For only in you can we live in safety.**

Leader: *Lord keep this nation under your care;*

All: **And guide us in the way of justice and truth**

Leader: *Let your way be known upon Earth;*

All: **Your saving health among all nations.**

Leader: *Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;*

All: **Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Leader: *Create in us clean hearts, O God;*

All: **And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

Leader: *In the Anglican cycle of prayer we pray for **The Diocese of Okigwe –
The Church of Nigeria***

*In the Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for **St. Stephen's, in Douglas**
We acknowledge and pay respect to the first peoples of this land
specially the Apache and Pascua Yaqui who call this area of Arizona t
heir home. Rejoicing in the fellowship of all your saints,*

All: **We commend these we pray for, ourselves, and the whole creation to
your unfailing love. Amen.**

Confession of Sin

Deacon: *Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.*

(The people stand, sit, or kneel.)

All: **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we
have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have
not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly
repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and
forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to
the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Absolution

“Presider: *Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.*

Exchange of the Peace

Presider *May the peace of Christ be always with you*

All **And also with you.**

The Ministers and People exchange signs of peace (peace sign, hugs, handshakes, fist bumps...)

Offertory

The Presider: Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name, bring offerings and come into his courts.

Doxology #380 vs 3 (*Peoples' offerings are brought to the altar*)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise him all creatures here below

Praise him, above, ye heavenly host

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

Rite II Prayer B BCP p.

372

Presider *The Lord be with you.*

People **And also with you.**

Presider *Lift up your hearts.*

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because of your goodness and the fullness of your love revealed in your abundant creation, in the sending of your Son and in the imparting of your Holy Spirit, our hearts are moved to thankful praise.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

All: *Sanctus - Hymnal 1982 S130*

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might (x2),
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest (x2).

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest (x2).

The people stand, sit, or kneel.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son.

For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts (+)

that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant.

Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified (+) by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **AMEN.**
And now as Jesus taught us, we pray:

Lord's Prayer: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

(In silence the Presider breaks the bread)

Fraction Anthem: The Lord Is My Light

**The Lord is my light and my salvation,
the Lord is my light and my salvation,
the Lord is my light and my salvation
whom shall I fear**

Invitation to Communion:

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on him in your hearts by faith and with thanksgiving.

(In this church, everyone is welcome to receive the bread and wine of Holy Communion. Please extend your hand to receive the bread and hold it until offered the cup/chalice to intinct it/dip it into the wine. If you prefer not to have the wine, you may consume the bread when you receive it. If prefer, you can cross your arms over your chest to receive a blessing instead of the bread and wine).

Birthday, Anniversary, Healing, Travel and Gratitude acknowledgement

Post Communion Prayer *The people stand as they are able.*

Presider: Let us pray:

Presider and People

Almighty and ever-living God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living Members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

Presider: May the simplicity, stillness, and serenity of this Advent season bring peace and fulfillment to your hearts and homes; and the blessing of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you now and always. **Amen.**

The Dismissal:

Presider: People of St. Stephen's, what does God call us to do?

People: We are called to love and serve.

Presider: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord! Alleluia, alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Continued... ^{[4][5][6]} and reached [Muziris](#) of [Tamilakam](#) (modern-day North Paravur and Kōdungalloor in [Kerala](#) State, [India](#)) in AD 52.^{[7][8][1]} In 1258, some of the relics were brought to [Ortona](#), in [Abruzzo](#), Italy, where they have been held in the Church of Saint Thomas the Apostle.^[9] He is regarded as the [patron saint](#) of India among its [Christian](#) adherents,^{[10][11]} and the Feast of Saint Thomas on July 3 is celebrated as Indian Christians' Day.^{[12][13]} The name *Thomas* remains quite popular among the Saint Thomas Christians of the Indian subcontinent.

Many churches in the Middle East and southern Asia claim to have an origin in Thomas's mission, including the [Chaldean Catholic Church](#),^[14] the [Assyrian Church of the East](#),^[15] the early church of Sri Lanka prior.^[16]

Gospel of John

Thomas first speaks in the [Gospel of John](#). In John 11:16,^[17] when [Lazarus](#) has recently died, and the apostles do not wish to go back to [Judea](#), Thomas says: "Let us also go, that we may die with him."^[b]

Thomas speaks again in John 14:5. There, [Jesus](#) had just explained that he was going away to prepare a heavenly home for his followers, and that one day they would join him there. Thomas reacted by saying, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?"^[18] John 20:24–29^[19] tells how [doubting Thomas](#) was skeptical at first when he heard that Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to the other apostles, saying, "Except I shall see on his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."^[20] But when Jesus appeared later and invited Thomas to touch his wounds and behold him, Thomas showed his belief by saying, "My Lord and my God".^[21] Jesus then said, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed [*are*] they that have not seen, and [*yet*] have believed."^[22]

Names and etymologies

The name *Thomas* ([Koine Greek](#): Θωμάς) given for the apostle in the New Testament is derived from the [Aramaic](#) ܬܫܘܡܐ *T'ōmā'*^{[23][24]} ([Classical Syriac](#): ܬܫܘܡܐ / ܬܫܘܡܐ *T'ōmā' / Tā'wma*), meaning "twin" and cognate to [Hebrew](#) ܕܫܘܡܐ *'ōm*. The equivalent term for twin in Greek, which is also used in the New Testament, is Δίδυμος *Didymos*.

Other names

The [Nag Hammadi](#) copy of the [Gospel of Thomas](#) begins: "These are the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymus, Judas Thomas, recorded." Early Syrian traditions also relate the apostle's full name as Judas Thomas.^[e] Some have seen in the [Acts of Thomas](#) (written in east Syria in the early 3rd century, or perhaps as early as the first half of the 2nd century) an identification of Thomas with the apostle Judas, Son of James, better known in English as [Jude](#). However, the first sentence of the Acts follows the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles in distinguishing the apostle Thomas and the apostle Judas son of James. Others, such as James Tabor, identify him as [Jude, brother of Jesus](#) mentioned by Mark. In the [Book of Thomas the Contender](#), part of the [Nag Hammadi library](#), he is alleged to be a twin to Jesus: "Now, since it has been said that you are my twin and true companion, examine yourself..."^[25]

A "[Doubting Thomas](#)" is a skeptic who refuses to believe without direct personal experience — a reference to the [Gospel of John](#)'s depiction of the Apostle Thomas, who, in John's account, refused to believe the resurrected [Jesus](#) had appeared to the ten other apostles until he could see and feel Jesus' [crucifixion wounds](#).

